



Department of Toxic Substances Control



Winston H. Hickox
Agency Secretary
California Environmental
Protection Agency

Edwin F. Lowry, Director
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, California 90630

Gray Davis
Governor

August 15, 2002

To the Public Notice Mailing List for the Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach Installation Restoration Program:

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT REQUESTED

Proposed Removal Action for Lead-Contaminated Soil at Water Tower

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) invites the public to review and comment on a draft Negative Declaration for a proposed soil cleanup at Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach, California. The draft Negative Declaration is the determination by DTSC that the proposed action will not result in a significant impact to the environment. The draft Negative Declaration was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The proposal is to remove soil contaminated with lead at Site 73, a 6-acre area under and surrounding the station's water tower. Although the lead contamination at the site does not pose a threat to humans, it does pose risk to local wildlife. Site 73 is a mostly flat, grassy area, located east of Seal Beach Boulevard, south of the main gate.

The proposed action involves excavation, removal, and disposal of approximately 400 cubic yards of lead-impacted soil. Because the area proposed for cleanup falls within a known archaeological site, the first step would be manual excavation conducted by a trained archaeologist to recover and catalog any potential cultural resources (artifacts). This would be followed by mechanical excavation with a backhoe to remove the contaminated soil. All the excavation activities would be conducted under the observation of an archaeological monitor and Native American monitor. The excavated soil would be transported by truck for off-site disposal at a permitted landfill. After excavation, soil samples would be collected from the site to verify that all contamination had been removed. Clean fill material would be added and compacted to return the site to its original grade. The area would then be revegetated with sod. The on-site field activities would be expected to begin in October 2002 and be completed by December 2002.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our Web-site at www.dtsc.ca.gov.

August 15, 2002
Page 2

The proposed removal action is part of the IRP, a Department of Defense program for cleaning up contamination resulting from past activities at military bases. The IRP was designed to meet the requirements of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), a federal law. CEQA is a state law that requires DTSC to review the proposed cleanup actions to make sure that those actions themselves will not harm the environment. For example, DTSC looked at whether the excavation of soil would disturb plant or animal habitat, create dust pollution, etc. DTSC's review, which is detailed in the draft Negative Declaration, concluded that the activities associated with the proposed cleanup would not result in any such effects.

The 30-day public comment period for the CEQA draft Negative Declaration begins on August 19, 2002 and extends through September 19, 2002. All comments postmarked by September 19, 2002 will be considered by DTSC before a final decision is made. Please refer to the enclosed public notice (which will in the *Orange County Register* on August 19, 2002) for further information on where to find the document and how to submit comments. The public notice contains information not only on the draft Negative Declaration, but on the proposed removal action itself. The public review and comment periods for the draft Negative Declaration and for the removal action are being conducted concurrently.

Should you have any questions on the draft Negative Declaration, please call or email Ms. Katherine Leibel, Remedial Project Manager, at (714) 484-5446; email address: kleibel@dtsc.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Douglas Bautista
Unit Chief
Federal Facility B
Office of Military Facilities
Southern California Branch

Attachment

NAVAL WEAPONS STATION SEAL BEACH
Proposed Soil Cleanup at Water Tower
*****Public Comment Invited*****

The Department of the Navy (DON) invites public comment on a proposal for removing soil contaminated with lead near a water tower at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach, California. The contamination is a result of painting and sandblasting done on the water tower over the years of 1944 to 1994. Although the lead contamination does not pose a threat to humans, it does pose a risk to local wildlife. The proposed cleanup plan is presented in a Draft Action Memorandum/Removal Action Work Plan.

In addition, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) invites public review and comment on a Draft Negative Declaration for the proposed removal action at Site 73, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Draft Negative Declaration is the determination by DTSC that the proposed cleanup action itself will not result in a significant impact to the environment.

Site 73 is a mostly flat grassy area of 6 acres, under and surrounding the station's water tower located east of Seal Beach Boulevard, south of the main gate.

Previous Public Review

The results of the environmental investigations conducted at the site, the cleanup alternatives considered, and the proposed removal action were presented in an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) issued by the DON on November 29, 2001 for a 30-day public comment period.

Proposed Cleanup Action

The proposed action involves excavation, removal, and disposal of approximately 400 cubic yards of lead-impacted soil. Because the area proposed for cleanup falls within a known archaeological site, the first step would be manual excavation conducted by a trained archaeologist to recover and catalog any potential cultural resources (artifacts). This would be followed by mechanical excavation with a backhoe to remove the contaminated soil. All the excavation activities would be conducted under the observation of an archaeological monitor and Native American monitor. The excavated soil would be transported by truck for off-site disposal at a permitted landfill. After excavation, soil samples would be collected from the site to verify that all contamination had been removed. Clean fill material would be added and compacted to return the site to its original grade. The area would then be revegetated with sod. The on-site field activities would be expected to begin in October 2002 and be completed by December 2002.

August 15, 2002

Page 4

Public Review and Comment Period

A 30-day public review and comment period for both the Draft Action Memorandum/Removal Action Work Plan and the Draft Negative Declaration will be held from **August 19, 2002** through **September 19, 2002**. Both documents are at the following locations: Seal Beach Public Library, Mary Wilson Branch, 707 Electric Avenue, Seal Beach, (562) 431-3584; and Building 110, 800 Seal Beach Blvd., Naval Weapons Station, Seal Beach, (562) 626-7897.

The Draft Negative Declaration is also available at the DTSC Cypress office at the address shown below for Katherine Leibel. Please contact Easter Deguzman at (714) 484-5336 to schedule an appointment.

Comments on the Draft Action Memorandum/Removal Action Work Plan should be postmarked or emailed by **September 19, 2002**, and sent to:

Commanding Officer, Environmental Department

Attn: Ms. Pei-Fen Tamashiro, Code N45S
Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach
800 Seal Beach Blvd., Seal Beach, CA 90740
email: tamashiro.peifen@sbeach.navy.mil

Comments on the Draft Negative Declaration should be postmarked or emailed by **September 19, 2002**, and sent to:

Katherine Leibel, DTSC Project Manager
5796 Corporate Avenue
Cypress, CA 90630
email: kleibel@dtsc.ca.gov

For more information on the Draft Action Memorandum/Removal Action Work Plan, please contact Pei-Fen Tamashiro at (562) 626-7897. For more information on the Draft Negative Declaration, please call Katherine Leibel at (714) 484-5446.